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# Herald of Good TIDINGS

SEPTEMBER  
2024

*“Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”*  
Isaiah 40:9

## FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR:

We have come to that sad day when we must part. My last Sunday is September 1, with my last working day being September 4. As I write this, most of my stuff is out of the office and the rest will soon be gone. It is time to say goodbye.

The customs and guidelines for interim ministry ask that we have no contact with one another for at least a year, in order that your relationship with Pastor Julie settle in; so you will not hear from me in this time.

But I am allowed, even encouraged, to share with you one last post of advice, for the days going forward.

- You have called a competent, highly experienced, well-educated leader. Let her lead.
- Don't forget to feed the pastor – feed her with feedback, helpful feedback, kind feedback, but both praise and things to think about.
- You are a caring fellowship. Caring calls you to listen to one another, encourage each person to use their voice, and be willing to welcome new and different ways of doing everything.

Pastors are the leaders of the congregation. This isn't a dictatorship, of course, but it is the recognition of the authority of a pastor's call to this work, her preparation for the work, and her years of practice in the work. When we work in partnership with local church leaders, they contribute local experience, beliefs, likes and dislikes, and together pastor and leaders discern paths forward.

Pastors work hard to provide worship, educational opportunities (like Bible Study) and events. The more interaction between you and Pastor Julie, the better. The more feedback, delivered with grace, the closer you all will grow together. Tell her when something speaks to you and, if you can, help her understand why it did that. Help her understand when something falls flat.

One of the foundational principles of congregational theology is the idea that every one of us has a voice – and an important voice – in what is going on. This means, of course, that not only should every one of us feel free to speak up, but each one of us is called to also listen. And not just listen to those with whom we agree, but listen to those who hold differing views.

You will have many wonderful days ahead. I don't imagine that every single day will be perfect, but I do see that you have an opportunity to continue serving Jesus Christ in Auburn, under the excellent leadership of your new pastor, Julie Cedrone.

May God bless you abundantly in the days to come,  
Virginia Child

*(We will miss Pastor Virginia and are grateful for her leadership during this time of transition. We pray God's continued blessing upon her life. Please join us in expressing our farewell wishes to her at a special coffee hour in her honor on Sunday, September 1st.)*

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Please mark your calendars for **Rally Day** which will take place on **Sunday, September 8th**. Rally Day is the official kick-off of Sunday School and we traditionally celebrate with ice cream!



September Birthdays include:  
 Jacob McPherson - Sept. 14th  
 Kim Davis - Sep. 14th  
 Beverly Geddes - Sept. 25th

**Happy Birthday,  
 Jake, Kim & Bev!**



On September 14th  
 Lori & Nick Stockhaus will  
 be celebrating their 33rd  
 wedding anniversary.

**Congratulations,  
 Lori & Nick!**

From your Pastoral Search Committee:

We would like to thank each and every member of our church for helping us over this past year. Suggestions, discussions, and just talking about the church's needs and wants helped guide us through the Church Profile and onto the interview process. Thank you for your support and participation in the candidate weekend with a potluck supper and hearing from the candidate that we thought was best for our church.

We reviewed many interesting candidates from the UCC and decided upon Rev. Dr. Julie Cedrone. We believe you will find Pastor Julie to be a warm, compassionate, respectful, open and knowledgeable person.

Pastor Julie was ordained with full standing in the UCC in 2003. In her early career she was a Chaplain and Spiritual Care Manager with Pathways Hospice in South San Francisco, CA. Pastor Julie was able to engage patients and their family members on such topics as personal values, legacy, self-care and health care preferences. She is compassionate and dedicated to the mission of providing quality end-of-life care and decisions. She has also worked with VNA Care Hospice in Worcester as a Chaplain. These experiences have enriched Pastor Julie and helped to provide a strong foundation and devotion to her continued work in faith.

Pastor Julie holds a BA in English, Women's Studies from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. She earned a Master's Degree in Divinity from Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, MA and a Doctor of Ministry from Boston University School of Theology in Boston, MA.

Pastor Julie will be with us starting September 8th. Please plan on introducing yourself to her if you have not had the time to meet her. For the first few weeks we will be wearing name tags at church so that she can begin to recognize us by our names.

Again, thank you for your support and encouraging words throughout our mission. We will be staying together as a committee to help with a smooth transition for our church and Pastor Julie. We look forward to embarking on a new chapter in our church's history with Pastor Julie as our spiritual leader.

Sincerely,

Nichole Angers, Tricia Gervasi, Lynda Hammond, Ron Hanks,  
 Connie Whitehead Hanks, Shannon Hartmann, Patricia Hilbert,  
 Deb Minor, Andy Sharr, Alyssa Rozak, Herb Mower (deceased)

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Congratulations on making it through another summer. We now have in front of us the amazing blessing of a “clean slate!” Many of our students have started not only a new school year, but also a new school or a new town altogether. I always looked forward to this time of year as a kid. Picking the “first day of school outfit” and showing off my new backpack and new notebooks (which were probably covered in New Kids On The Block). It was exciting to see how my peers changed and evolved over the summer months. We all had a new start, a new beginning, a new opportunity to make better choices (because we learned from those choices that were not the best ones... right? \*wink\*). Sunday School holds the same excitement!

This year is going to be filled with many exciting new things, not just the first day or even the first month. The Lord has blessed this church with a wonderful new Pastor. Pastor Julie is going to be a tremendous addition to our church family. She is starting new and fresh too! I am looking forward to spending time with Pastor Julie to talk about ALL our youth programs, from cradle roll through confirmation and up to our 18-year-olds! She and I, along with Michele and the BOCE, will be brainstorming new ideas, trying new things and creating new opportunities for our children to not only grow in his or her faith, but also to enjoy being part of our church family.



This year’s theme for Sunday School (S.S) will be “Learning is a Lifelong Journey.” I chose this theme for our adults, as well as for our children. My hope is to inspire more adults to volunteer and join us in teaching our S.S. students. I am confident if you ask Michele, she will feel the same as me. I learn something new with every single interaction I have with our students. That is true for our 4 and 5-year-olds, just as much as it is true for our confirmation students. I learn so much every time I prepare a S.S. lesson. Our children are all brilliant in their own way. I implore you to make a small commitment, this year, to get to know them a little better!

September through November, we will be taking a journey through the Old Testament. The students will learn about Moses, David, Nebuchadnezzar to start. We will have a special guest in November to teach the students about Hannukah and learn a Jewish prayer. December will be for Jesus, Mary and Joseph! If these topics speak to you, please come find me and I will get you in the classroom!!!!

Thank you all for your constant love and support! I am so excited to start this new year with all I have learned so far! Remember, it is NEVER too late to learn something new.

I Love You! ~Shannon Hartmann

### COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sept. 1	The MacPhees
Sept. 8	Rally Sunday! Board of Christian Education (BOCE)
Sept. 15	Personnel Committee
Sept. 22	Music Committee & Historian
Sept. 29	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>



On Sunday, June 30th, we celebrated the baptism of Ryleigh Marie Monahan, the (then) 16-month-old daughter of John and Nikole Monahan. We pray God’s continued blessing upon Ryleigh and her family.



### **Here We Grow** Preschool

Welcome to the 35<sup>th</sup> year of Here We Grow Preschool being an educational outreach program of the First Congregational Church in Auburn. Although I am not ready for summer to end, I am excited for the start of another great school year. On September 3, 2024, our doors will open as we welcome our children and families for another wonderful year of meeting and making new friends and exploring and learning in a beautiful environment. We have a limited number of openings still available for this year. I am receiving phone calls from families wanting to visit Here We Grow and conducting tours, but we can't do it without your help. Please spread the word to anyone looking for a great preschool. Check out our website or look us up on Facebook.

We are very excited to welcome back our returning staff: Brenda Carbonneau, Anne Coyne, Jill Myhre, Mary Soderberg, Jill Stohlman and Courtney Tomaszewicz; as well as 2 new teachers to the Here We Grow family — Meghan Shanahan and Paige Peak. They are a fantastic group of ladies who bring joy and excitement to our program. These ladies are truly the heart of our program. I look forward to working with all of them this year.

Thanks for all the help we received to get ready for the new school year. A big thank you to Mike Schillinger for all the help he gives Here We Grow and the excellent job he did preparing the classrooms. Stan MacPhee, Ron and Connie Hanks for all the hard work on the gardens and the exterior of the building as well as helping me get through the stress of the installation of new windows and getting the overhang at the Here We Grow entrance repaired. A big thank you to Bob Murray for organizing that repair in a timely manner. I couldn't get it all done without the extra help.

Here We Grow wants to extend a warm welcome to the new minister of the Church, we are looking forward to working with her. Our deepest condolences to Michele and Mike Schillinger and Shannon Hartmann and family for the loss of your father/grandfather.

Until next month, enjoy the weather and stay safe.

Cristi Corey  
Here We Grow Director

### **Help Us Celebrate 100 Years of Scouting!**

Scout Troop 101 is celebrating its Centennial with an Open House here on Saturday, September 7th, from 11AM to 2PM. This 100th Anniversary is special for Troop 101 because it has been sponsored by First Congregational Church for the entire time. Scout Centennials are uncommon but being with only one charter organization is much more rare.

The scouts are planning an outdoor grill (on the church lawn) serving hot dogs, chips and cold drinks, as well as hosting an Open House for prospective new Cubs and Scouts.

Indoors, they will set up a big display of much of the troop's collection as well as photographs of scouts over the decades.

Members of the church are welcome to view the display. All former members of the troop - leaders and scouts - are invited to take "a walk down memory lane."

Former scouts and leaders who have a question may contact George Fournier 774-402-1393 or Laurence Reich 508-612-4976.

### FROM OUR ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR

Welcome to September! I hope you all had a wonderful summer and are all rested up! September means the beginning of our choirs—singing and ringing. The choir will begin rehearsals on Thursday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm. Bell choir begins rehearsals on Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, at 10am.

As we welcome our new minister, Pastor Julie Cedrone, I hope you will consider joining either choir. We work hard, but we have a lot of fun working together to make beautiful music. No matter your music reading skill level, we will all help you along. You may be surprised at how quickly you catch on. Music is such an important part of our worship together. I would ask you to prayerfully consider joining us in one of these groups. If being in a music group is not for you, then you can still contribute your voices to the worship service by singing the hymns joyfully with full voices!



Ps. 96 *Sing a new song to the Lord...with the harp and the sound of song,  
with trumpets and the sound of the horn, raise a shout before the Lord!*

Blessings to all!

Paulette LaBarre

### FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

As a reminder, the 2024 'partial year' statements that cover 2024 pledges from January 1st through August 31st will be mailed out in September. To save on postage, only outstanding pledges will be mailed and not those currently caught up in their pledges. Please be assured that from every pledge received, no matter the amount, your gift of love and support, in turn, is blessed and appreciated. As always, thank you for helping us with our yearly budgeting needs. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your pledge, contact me (Sue MacPhee) at home: 508-832-9347, or email me at: [susiemac2002@gmail.com](mailto:susiemac2002@gmail.com). Please include your name and call back number with some details that will help me in responding. Thank you.

### FROM OUR PARISH NURSE



I hope everyone had a nice summer. Time seems to go quickly some-times. The summer vacation you talked about, planned, and then enjoyed, is now a memory. I know that tomorrow is not promised, so we have to live for each day.

Now we'll be getting into the fall season. **Time to think about getting a flu shot. The pharmacist from Auburn Pharmacy is coming to the church on Sunday, October 6th.** As of now, it's only for the flu shot. I will let you know if he's got any others to offer. In September, I will put the sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall; one for under 65, the other age 65 and older.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis  
Parish Nurse, cell: 508-612-4521



Dear members of the First Congregational Church in Auburn,

My Eagle Scout Project was delivered to the church on August 17, 2024. Below is the data on how the project came together:

533 hours  
 51 volunteers  
 \$2,170 in funds raised  
 \$2,168 expenses  
 \$3,315 total project cost with estimates for the donated materials

I could not have made this project possible without each and every donation, whether it was monetary, equipment, or time. Thank you for supporting my Eagle Project!

I'm looking forward to the 2024 pumpkin season and seeing the 'Pumpkin Pergola' loaded with pumpkins.

Thanks again,  
 Nathan Minor, Troop 53

Dear Memorial/Scholarship Committee,

I am writing this as a way of saying I am so very grateful and blessed to have been chosen as the recipient of the Jay E. Murray Scholarship. I truly am very thankful and will be able to put it to good use towards my education of becoming a nurse. Again, thank you all so much for your time and effort in choosing me! God bless,

Brooke Castellano



IMAGINE together is the stewardship theme for 2024-2025.

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever." Ephesians 2:22

Much has been accomplished this year by the many people who gave generously of their time and treasures. Just to name a few:

- New windows have been installed and the Women's Fellowship has been reinstated with new energy from Michele and Paula.
- Our pumpkin patch will be enhanced through the imagination and skill of Eagle Scout Nathan Minor.
- This coming year can provide much innovative thinking and creative expression as we experience leadership from our new pastor Rev. Dr. Julie Cedrone.

IMAGINE what we can accomplish TOGETHER!

Since the printing of the June *Tidings* in late May, the following families have suffered the loss of loved ones. Please continue to keep the families in your prayers.



On June 2, 2024, Robert T. Koopman, born February 5, 1929 in Medford, MA, passed away in Hendersonville, NC, at the age of 95. He leaves behind his beloved wife of 36 years, Dorothy A. Koopman. Being the son of Jan and Maria Kroese Koopman, he was especially proud of his Dutch heritage and kept in touch with cousins in the Netherlands.

Robert graduated from Medford High School in 1946 and received his BS in Engineering from Northeastern University in Boston, MA in 1951. He was commissioned in the U. S. Coast & Geodetic Survey from July 1951 to October 1954.

He spent his working life in the water industry, in the process of design as well as construction. He was a member of the NEWWA for over 50 years, a life member of the American Water Works Association and a Rotarian for over forty years.

He leaves his son Thomas Koopman of Auburn, MA; two daughters Karen K. Urbanovitch of New Port Richey, FL and Laura J. Koopman of Worcester, MA; two step children, Erykah McCracken of Holyoke, MA and Kirk McCracken of San Diego, CA; eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Robert enjoyed traveling (river cruising, in particular), cooking, painting, woodworking, bridge, board games, helping first graders with reading and sixth graders with science, working with CASA, volunteering for the blind, donating blood/platelets, being a Big Brother in the BBBS program, helping at the Boys & Girls Club, participating in FCUCC church activities and rescuing greyhounds.

\* \* \* \* \*

Please pray for the Schillinger/Hartmann Family due to the loss of Michele's dad, Gary Trottier, who passed on August 19, 2024. In addition to Michele, Michael, Craig, Shannon and family, please pray for Michele's mom, Judy, and Michele's siblings (Mark, Lance, Christopher, Yvonne, Sarah) and their families. Gary also leaves his brother P. Brent Trottier, sister Lynn Trottier and sister-in-law Jean Trottier as well as numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Gary was predeceased by his parents, Aime and Anita Trottier, his brother Robert Trottier, his son Matthew Trottier and his grandson Jason Trottier.

#### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP DATES TO REMEMBER — please watch for sign-up sheets to these events

- Craft night Wednesday, September 18, at 6:30 p.m.
- Pumpkin patch serving opportunities, 1-4 p.m. (9/28, 10/5, 10/12, 10/19 and 10/26)
- Thanksgiving floral arrangement with Berg Florist - Friday, November 22, 6-9 p.m.
- "Everything Pumpkin" bake sale Sunday, November 24 - watch for sign-up sheets for bakers
- Holiday Marketplace — Sunday, December 8, after church
- Christmas party gathering with a Yankee Swap - Saturday, December 14, from 1-3 p.m.
- Monthly planning meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of the month 9-11 a.m. in fellowship hall

# THE PUMPKINS ARE COMING, THE PUMPKINS ARE COMING!

HELP IS NEEDED FOR THE PUMPKIN ARRIVAL ON SEPTEMBER 21ST!

Please mark your calendars to help unload pumpkins on Saturday morning, September 21<sup>st</sup>. This ends up being a fun time for both the young and young at heart. The pumpkins are due to arrive at 9 a.m., but in the past, the driver often shows up early, so unloading may begin as early as 8:00 AM. (Unloading is a rain or shine event.)

In past years, it was **very difficult**, due to a lack of manpower, to form a human chain from the truck to each pallet. So, if we could have **ALL HANDS ON DECK**, that would be awesome. We also need volunteers to cover the daily sale hours of 10 - 2 and 2 - 6, but **ANY hours you can offer would be greatly appreciated!** Please look for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall. Ideally, we would like to have scheduling in place well ahead of time so that we're not scrambling at the last minute to secure coverage at the patch. So, please check your calendars NOW. **(THANKYOU!)**

You may also call the church office, 508-832-2845, to add your name to the schedule.

**Thank you in advance,**

The Pumpkin Patch Committee:  
Deb Minor, Tricia Gervasi and Michelle Bigelow



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## September 2024

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT